**Idaho -- Abstract of the 2014 status talk**

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The decline of the abundance of Snake River steelhead led to their listing as threatened in October 1997, pursuant to the federal Endangered Species Act. Development of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS), particularly the four dams and reservoirs on the Lower Snake River, is considered to be the primary factor in the decline of Snake River steelhead. About 60% of the historical steelhead habitat in Idaho is still available, primarily in the Salmon and Clearwater river drainages. About 30% of Idaho's existing steelhead habitat is included within designated wilderness or wild and scenic river corridors. There is a mix of natural and hatchery steelhead production strategies in Idaho, ranging from wild refugia to large-scale hatchery programs to provide harvest opportunities. Areas managed for wild steelhead include the Lochsa and the Selway river drainages of the Clearwater River, the Middle Fork and South Fork drainages of the Salmon River, Rapid River, tributaries of the Salmon River downstream of the MF Salmon River, and tributaries of the Clearwater River downstream of the SF Clearwater.

Since the 1960s, the composition of the steelhead run entering Idaho has changed. The proportion of hatchery origin steelhead has steadily increased due to declining returns of natural fish and development of hatcheries. During 1960’s, the Snake River steelhead run was essentially 100% wild. From 1975-79, the steelhead run at Lower Granite Dam averaged 59% naturally-produced fish and from 1985-89, the run averaged 24% naturally-produced fish. From 1990-2010, the run averaged 14% naturally-produced steelhead. The run has averaged 23% naturally produced fish in the recent four years (2001-02 to 2013-14). This is the first time the wild run has exceed 20% of the total return for four consecutive years since spawn years 1981 – 1984.

IDFG and other Snake River basin managers have initiated genetic sampling of all hatchery broodstock so may be used to identify fish at any life-stage. This method provides nearly a 100% mark rate and allows identification of a fish to its parents (and hence hatchery and age). IDFG has initiated an genetic sampling program at Lower Granite Dam. A representative sample from the entire smolt and adult run is obtained. Technicians obtain a scale sample, record the presence or absence of the adipose fin, and measure fork length. Parental Based Tagging (PBT) techniques are used to assign adipose clipped fish to hatchery stocks and Brood Year and to determine the proportion of unclipped adipose fish that are hatchery origin. Genetic Stock Identification (GSI) techniques are then used to assign unclipped non-hatchery origin fish into reporting groups.